

XV. *A remarkable Instance of the happy Effect of Musk, in a very dangerous Case; by James Parsons, M. D. F. R. S.*

Read Feb. 20.
1745-6.

MR. *Darlington*, who lodges at the *Cheshire Cheese* below *Charing-Cross*, a Man of a robust Habit of Body, was taken ill about the Beginning of *December* last of a *Rheumatic Fever*, attended with the Loss of the Use of his Limbs, excessive Pain in every Part, and Swellings in his Knees and Hands, with all the other Symptoms usual in this kind of Fever: Besides which he cough'd up grumous Blood, and had a Pain which was very violent in his right Side, from a Fall against the Edge of a Table, a few Days before he was seiz'd with this Fever, which render'd his Case the more dangerous.

During the first ten Days he was attended by his Apothecary only; who, finding him grow worse, propos'd a Physician, who was accordingly called in, and order'd a Bleeding, with such other Remedies as he thought necessary: This, I understood, was the second time he had been let Blood. But the Patient by this time was so averse to taking Medicines, that he did not duly follow the Method order'd by this Gentleman, and at length absolutely refused to take any more, and so discharged the Doctor on the fourth Day of his Attendance.

On the fifteenth Day of his Illness he sent for me, having been formerly concerned for some of his Family. I found his Symptoms increased, and

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his Disease gaining Ground apace. I had him let Blood immediately, which was one third Part Size, and order'd it to be repeated, and put him under such a Regimen as the State of his Case then required; but as soon as I was gone, he refused to comply with my Prescriptions also. I express'd my Concern for his obstinate Temper, and left him on my fourth Visit.

Thus were eighteen Days passed, and his Case growing more desperate every Day. I heard no more of him till five Days after, which was on the twenty-third Day of his Disease, when I was intreated to visit him again, and found him most miserably afflicted with two of the most dangerous Symptoms that can appear at the End of such a dangerous Distemper; *viz.* a long *Intermission* of his *Pulse* every third or fourth Stroke, and a most fatiguing *Hiccup*, which struck him violently about ten times in a Minute.

His Case was now deplorable and desperate (thro' his own Folly), and what I was almost ready to give up, especially as he was then very weak and delirious: However, willing to assist him, and calling to Mind the Accounts of the Musk some time since communicated to this Learned *Society* *, was resolved to have recourse to it here. Accordingly I directed a Draught, consisting of an Ounce and half of strong Cinamon-water, two Drams of compound Piony-water, and fifteen Grains of *Musk*, with Orders to increase the Dose of Musk to twenty Grains, and repeat the Draught every six Hours. I also told his Wife to give him a Glass of Sack, as often as he would have it; and at the same time caused three Blistering Plaisters

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* See these *Transf.* n. 474, p. 212.

to be laid on to his Neck and Arms, which, among other things, he had refused before.

In four Hours after the first Draught the intermitting Pulse was alter'd to a very calm regular one; but the Hiccup continued with the same Violence, till he had taken the fifth Draught; and then return'd only once in six or seven Minutes.

His Senses were now restored, and he grew chearful and easy, and said, he would take no more of any kind whatsoever: But, being unwilling to cease the Exhibition of a Medicine which bid so fair for his Recovery, I gave him a Glass of Sack, into which the sixth Draught was privately pour'd, which took away his Hiccup intirely.

The next Day he had an Appetite to eat, and was indulged by his Wife with a large Chicken, a great deal of Bread, and a Pint of Beer and Ale, which he eat greedily: This overcharg'd his Stomach, and brought on his Hiccup again, which fatigued him much, before I visited him in the Afternoon. Whereupon I directed a purging Draught immediately, which emptied him well, and conquer'd his Hiccup, and every other bad Symptom.

Next Day I found him well, limited his Diet for a few Days, with Directions to repeat his Purge once more, after three Days; and in a Fortnight he went abroad.

The Blisters might perhaps conduce, in some measure, to do him Service; but, as the Man was so many Days ill, and reduced to a Condition very little, if at all, better than that of a dying Man, I believe the *Musk*, rather than the Blisters, was the Medicine that restored him: For I have often seen
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the latter applied in a greater Number in vain, even when the Symptoms were not so seemingly desperate as in the Case before you.

He took near one hundred and five Grains of Musk in about thirty Hours; but I can't say he either slept or perspired more than ordinary upon it.

XVI. *Part of a Letter from the Rev. Dr. Miles, F.R.S. to Mr. Henry Baker, F.R.S. concerning Electrical Fire.*

Dear Sir,

Read Feb. 20. 1745-6. **Y**OU query, Whether that subtil Fire which kindles warm'd Spirit of Wine, be resident in the Body from which it evidently issues, and be kindled occasionally? or, Whether it comes from the excited Tube pervading instantaneously the Body it is applied to? or, lastly, whether there are certain Principles in the Air, which are thus agitated into an extemporaneous Lightning? These Queries are certainly very comprehensive and important; I wish I were able to return you somewhat more satisfactory than Suppositions.

I incline to think the electrical and luminous *Effluvia* to be the same, and not distinct Substances. Mr. *Hauksbee* seems to distinguish them, intimating, that no luminous Matter would be communicated from an excited Cylinder of Wax to his Finger, when brought near to the Cylinder, though it attracted light Bodies; but it is to be observed, that this Cy-
linder